United Nations S/2003/1073

Security Council

Distr.: General
11 November 2003

Original: English

Identical letters dated 4 November 2003 from the representatives of Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

We, the undersigned Permanent Representatives and Chargé d'affaires a.i., present our compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the President of the Security Council and, with reference to the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Iraq's neighbouring countries held in Damascus on 1 and 2 November 2003, have the honour to transmit the text of the final statement (see annex).

We should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ahmed **Aboul Gheit**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) M. Javad **Zarif**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid **Al-Hussein**
Permanent Representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Mansour Ayyad **Al-Otaibi**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Permanent Mission of the State of Kuwait
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Fawzi Bin Abdul Majeed **Shobokshi**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
to the United Nations

03-60866 (E) 121103

(*Signed*) Fayssal **Mekdad**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Ümit **Pamir**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations

Annex to the identical letters dated 4 November 2003 from the representatives of Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic and English]

Final Statement of the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Neighbouring Countries of Iraq

Damascus, 2 November 2003

In response to the invitation extended by the Syrian Arab Republic to hold a meeting for the neighbouring countries of Iraq with the objective of discussing the current developments in Iraq and their repercussions at regional and international levels, the Foreign Ministers of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Turkey, the State of Kuwait and the Syrian Arab Republic held a meeting in Damascus on 7 Ramadan A.H. 1424 corresponding to 2 November 2003. The Ministers extended an invitation to the interim Iraqi Foreign Minister to attend the meeting but they did not receive a response; however, they expressed their hope that a representative of Iraq could attend their forthcoming meetings.

The Ministers recalled their previous meetings held in Istanbul on 23 January 2003, in Riyadh on 18 April 2003, and in Tehran on 28 May 2003, and discussed the current situation in Iraq as a contribution to the objective of enhancing the unity and independence of Iraq and its sovereignty over its territories and natural resources as recognized by the Security Council in resolution 1511 (2003). Pursuant to their deliberations, the Ministers agreed on:

1. Expressing their sympathy and full solidarity with the Iraqi people in regard to the ordeal they suffer due to the serious deterioration of the security, as well as the economic and living conditions.

2. Rejecting any measure that may lead to the disintegration of Iraq, the Ministers reiterated their respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political unity of Iraq, and their commitment to the principle of non-interference in its domestic affairs, and called upon all others to do the same.

3. Emphasizing the right of the Iraqi people to freely determine their political future, the importance of enhancing the United Nations vital role in Iraq, especially in regard to supervising the drafting of a constitution, carrying out elections and setting up a timetable to accelerate the transfer of authority to the Iraqis and end the occupation, so as to enable them to regain their rights and sovereignty over their territories.

4. Supporting the efforts of the Transitional Governing Council in carrying out its transitional responsibilities until the formation of an elected and fully representative Iraqi government that fulfils the aspirations and interests of the Iraqi people, and ensures equality for all the citizens of a united Iraq.

5. Reiterating the responsibilities of the occupying authority in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and international law, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, with regard to the responsibilities of the occupying forces to maintain security and stability in Iraq, and rejecting any accusation against their countries of interfering in the internal affairs of Iraq.

6. Condemning the terrorist bombings that target civilians, humanitarian and religious institutions, embassies and international organizations working in Iraq, and stressing the necessity to identify their perpetrators and to hold them accountable for their crimes.

7. Expressing their concern about the existence of terrorist groups in Iraq and the threat that any other armed groups in Iraq represent for neighbouring countries, the Ministers called upon the responsible Iraqi authorities to cooperate with their countries to eliminate this danger against the neighbouring countries and prevent any violation of the borders.

8. Bearing in mind the negative impact of instability and lack of well-being of the Iraqi people on their national interests, the Ministers decided to call on their representatives at the United Nations to collectively follow up their interaction with the United Nations role in Iraq.

The Ministers expressed their thanks to the Syrian Arab Republic for holding this consultative meeting in Damascus, and their appreciation for meeting with H.E. President Bashar Al-Assad and for his views. They expressed their solidarity with the Syrian Arab Republic regarding Israel exploiting the regional developments in its aggression against the Syrian territories. They also agreed that the meetings, initiated by Iraq's neighbouring countries, are worthy of support and continuation to strengthen those objectives in the future. The Ministers, therefore, decided to hold further meetings until Iraq completely restores its sovereignty, security, stability and ordinary life. They also welcomed the invitation of the State of Kuwait to host the next meeting.